



Let The Bible Speak

SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

REDEMPTION

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Redemption is the action of saving or being saved from sin or evil or it is the action of regaining something in exchange for payment or clearing a debt to get something back (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*).

Redemption through Jesus Christ

Several New Testament verses teach that the Redemption of the nations, people, and races of this world is basically the forgiveness of sins, wrought for us through the sacrificial blood of the Lamb of God, that is, by Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 1:7** says that in Him we have redemption through His blood, the *forgiveness* of sins, according to the riches of God's grace. Jesus was a sacrificial lamb to buy our Redemption (**Romans 3:25**).



Redemption can also be understood as the promise of God to deliver us from the power of sin. All nations except for Israel were alienated from the Salvation of God. Gentiles did not have a relationship with God (**Ephesians 2:11-12**), but they were brought near to God (**Ephesians 2:18**). This verse says, "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."

The Two Parts of Redemption

The conception of Redemption can be looked at in these two parts:

- The carnal (helpless) nature of humankind (before the death of Christ Jesus)
- Jesus Christ's sacrificial life critical to save humankind.

These are two parts to the subject of Redemption. The first part is the state of sinfulness and helplessness of humankind that needed a Savior (**Romans 3:25**). The English Standard Version says "*whom God put forward as propitiation by his blood, to*

be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins." According to this verse, God needed to show His fairness and justice by taking an atonement for sins committed at the time Israel was offering animal sacrifices.

The other part is the sacrificial (ransom) life of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, which was critical in restoring man's relationship with God.

Forgiveness of Sin

Redemption is basically about forgiveness of sin; and the price for our Redemption—the blood of the Lamb of God—is by far more costly than the blood of bulls and goats required under the Old Testament. The Scriptures say **that** blood could not take away sin (**Hebrews 10:3-8**).

From the study so far, it will be noted that *Grace* brought us Redemption and we were undeserving of God's grace. This fact notwithstanding, God saved us, not that we merit it, for we were in darkness and followed the ways of the Gentiles (**Ephesians 4: 17-18**).

Paul adds, "*He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the son of His love*" (**Colossians 1: 13-14**). That work is done only through Jesus Christ whose death was required so that we could be delivered from that darkness.

The fundamental message of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of Israel's hope for a Messiah—that in Jesus Christ, the long-awaited Redemption arrived. The deliverance of humankind from a state of alienation from God was accomplished through the death and resurrection of Jesus (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**).

Conclusion

We were a lost people who through the great mercy of God are now redeemed, not with perishable things but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ (**1 Peter 1:18**). The

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subject of Redemption cuts across the span of the entire Old and New Testaments. By the mercy of God, we have Forgiveness of Sins, we have been Purchased from the Bondage of Darkness and Evil, and we have been Reconciled to a Loving God by the Precious Blood of the Lamb of God (**1 Corinthians 6:20**).

It's no wonder the Revelator says about Jesus: "*You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation*" (**Revelation 5:9**).

The writer of Hebrews brings the point home for every person when he asks, "*How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?*" (**Hebrews 2:3**). Our salvation is great, not because of us but because of the One who planned it and the One who gave Himself for it. Indeed, how shall we escape if we ignore it?

THERE'S JOY IN SERVING JESUS

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In Luke 10, Jesus sends out seventy disciples to share news of the coming kingdom to those in nearby regions. When they return, Luke records that they do so with joy, marveling at the great authority Jesus gave them to cast out demons. Interestingly, Jesus acknowledges this great gift of power he bestowed upon them; and then he admonishes them, saying, "*Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven*" (**Luke 10:20**).



Though the modern disciple does not possess this same supernatural ability, he does share in the same joy: his name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, having entered into a relationship with the Father through the soul-cleansing waters of baptism (**Revelation 3:5; Acts 2:38**).

To the world around us, joy is found in that which is transient and superficial. All is fleeting when the focus is on this physical life's limited offerings. In contrast, the Christian's joy is found in that which is eternal and supernatural! Paul writes in **Romans 6:23** that "*the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" This promise remains unchanged for the remainder of time. When we trust and obey, we are filled

with hope and joy amidst even the greatest difficulties of life; and we rest in the peaceful confidence that God will honor His promise should we remain faithful.

The joy we experience in serving Jesus becomes a transforming attitude that changes the way we view the Scriptures. Sometimes we read a passage in which God's perfect will challenges our way of living. We may wonder, "Do I really have to do that? Is it *that* important that I observe this command?" Reflective questioning can be good mental exercise, but it yields fruit only when we abolish our selfish desires and hold closely to God's pattern for the Christian life. Truly, if God is for us, desiring that all men everywhere should come to a knowledge of the truth (**1 Timothy 2:3-4**), we need to allow our joyful service to Him to transform the way we read His word. Instead of seeing commands as a strict list of do's and don'ts, we can choose to submit with joy, knowing our obedience plays a part in "*all things working together for good*" (**Romans 8:28**).

In **Ephesians 5:8-9**, Paul writes, "*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light...finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*" If we are to become wise in our Christian walk, we must trade in the temporary joy of selfish pursuits for the eternal joy of submitting to God's word.

Our joy can also serve as a motivating reflection. In **Matthew 7:17-20**, Jesus gives the illustration of knowing a person by his fruit. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**), an outward trait that grows from an inward seed. When we exhibit joy, we produce good fruit that is noticed by others. Whether our joy is expressed through high energy and a big smile or inner delight and a gentle word, it should be a reflection of the great hope we have in Jesus that strengthens us daily. **Proverbs 17:22** advises: "*A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones*" (ESV). We can use this medicine to open doors in personal evangelism; many times, the spirit with which we begin a conversation can set the tone for a person's openness to receive the message of the gospel. It's hard not to notice someone whose life is filled with great joy!

When we let our lights burn brightly for the Lord, the spiritual harvest multiplies. The Christian who adopts an attitude of joy will have a changed heart and a noticeable lifestyle. Heaven awaits the one whose gladness is without circumstance and whose submission is without begrudging. May we echo the words of David unto God: "*You will show me the path of life. In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore*" (**Psalm 16:11**).



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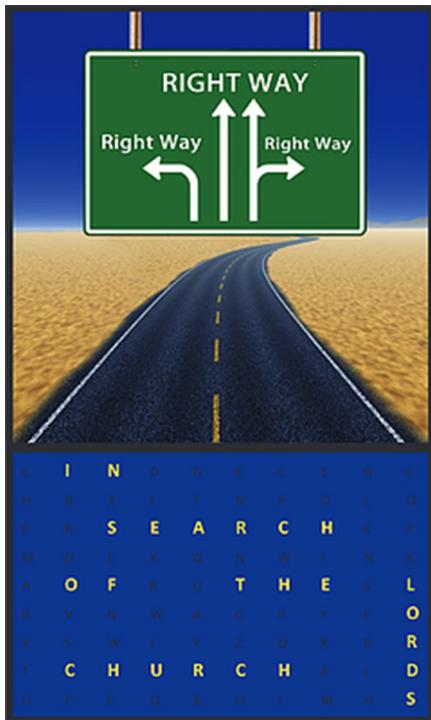
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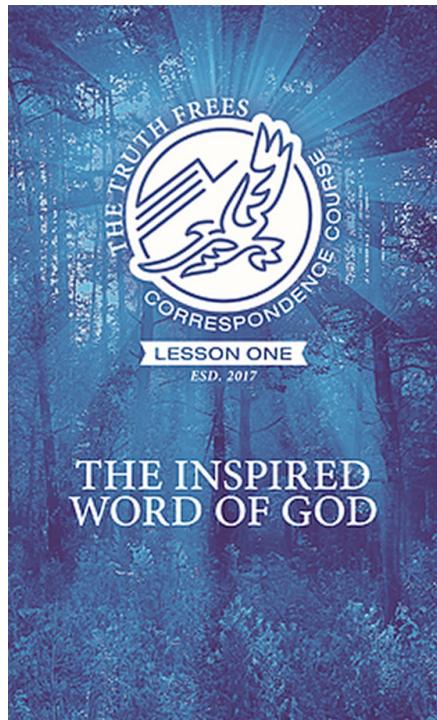
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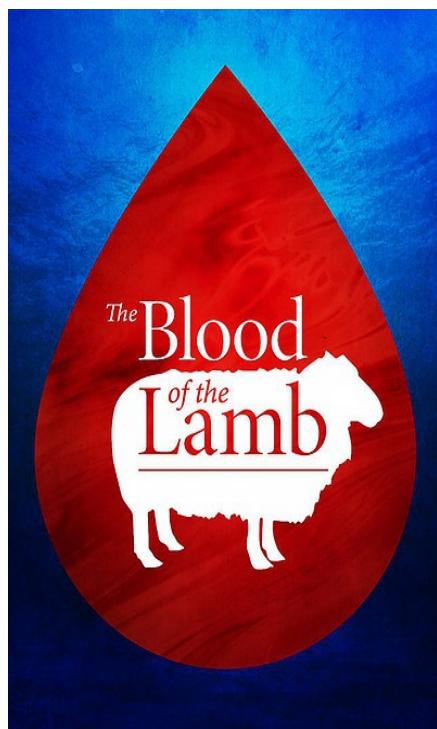


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